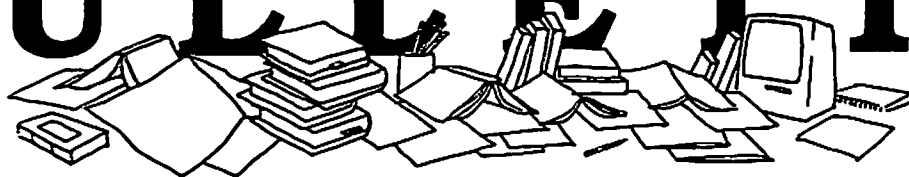


# THE LITERACY MATERIALS BULLETIN



5

Spring 1992

This is the last issue of the Bulletin for fiscal 1991-1992. We hope there will be funding next year to continue the work of the committee and the publication of more Bulletins.

The committee has received positive feedback from teachers, tutors, and librarians who have told us that they find the Bulletin a useful source of information. They seem to especially like the fact that all the materials reviewed have been field tested by learners in several programs. We have also had letters and calls from groups and individuals in other provinces. Recently, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network asked for permission to reprint one of our Bulletins in its entirety in order to "jump start" a similar publication there.

In an effort to renew the committee, we have made some recent changes. Andrew Kennedy from Camosun College and Barbara Bate from Fraser Valley University College have stepped down after serving for three years. I would like to thank both of them for the outstanding work they did in selecting, field testing, and reviewing materials.

We have added three new members. They are Yana Sabanskis from the Hastings Adult Learning Centre of the Vancouver School Board, Sandi Lavalie from Northwest Community College in Houston, and Sylvia Doherty from Cariboo College in Williams Lake.

I, too, am stepping down after the publication of this Bulletin. Laurie Gould has agreed to chair the committee for 1992-93, provided there is funding. I have enjoyed getting this project started and working with the dedicated and energetic members of this committee.

Joan Acosta  
Chairperson  
Literacy Materials  
Committee

## Literacy Materials Committee (1991-1992)

**Joan Acosta**  
Capilano College  
986-5401

**Barbara Bate**  
Fraser Valley University  
College  
792-0025

**Paula Davies**  
College of New Caledonia  
561-5835

**Lorraine Fox**  
Native Tutoring Centre  
874-0664

**Laurie Gould**  
Vancouver Community  
College, KEC  
871-7364

**Andrew Kennedy**  
Camosun College  
370-3324

**Basha Rahn**  
Sooke School District  
474-2175

**Maureen Stephens**  
Okanagan College  
762-5445

**Loraine Wong**  
Langley School District  
534-0333

RESOURCE PERSON:

**Thomas Guigley**  
Vancouver Public Library  
682-8024

## *The Elders Are Watching*

**Author/Artist:** Dave Bouchard/Roy Henry Vickers

**Publisher:** Eagle Dancer Enterprises Ltd., 1990

**Available:** Box 527, Tofino, B.C., V0R 2Z0

**Tel:** (604) 725-3235 **Fax:** (604) 725-4466

**Price:** \$16.95

**Reviewed by:** Barbara Bate

**Level:** All Levels

**ISBN** 0-9693485-3-3

*The Elders Are Watching* is truly a beautiful book. It features the strong, sensitive, West Coast paintings of native artist Roy Henry Vickers and the poignant words of writer Dave Bouchard. Together, the artist and the author project a powerful message of peace, hope, beauty, and love.

*The Elders Are Watching* is for everyone. For non-readers Vickers' imagery bursts with language. For independent readers Bouchard's prose challenges a high level of critical thought. In multi-level classrooms, instructors might present the pictures while reading the text aloud—an opportunity for a cultural literacy discussion (art, literature, customs).

The book contains 24 of Vickers' paintings, each coupled with four lines of verse. The result is a combination of imagery and language which draws the reader spiritually.

Instructors/tutors who wish to build a unit around this book should know that in December '91, Knowledge Network aired a documentary on Roy Henry Vickers. Like the book, the documentary is exceptional.



You promised you'd care for the cedar and fir,  
The mountains, the sea and the sky.  
To the Elders these things are the essence of life.  
Without them a people will die.



## *The Spirit of Vocabulary (Canada)*

**Authors:** Ken and Cecile Weber

**Publisher:** Globe/Modern Curriculum Press, 1991

**Available:** Globe/Modern, 3771 Victoria Park Ave.,  
Scarborough, Ontario., M1W 2P9 Tel: 1-800-263-4005

**Price:** \$11.95

**Reviewed by:** Andrew Kennedy

**Level:** Functional/Independent

**ISBN** 0-88996-228-6

*The Spirit of Vocabulary (Canada)* is the first of six books in *The Vocabulary of Canada* series. This workbook presents 21 stories on past and present Canadian personalities and events. Each story includes photographs and several pages of exercises. The stories are written in a journalistic style with simple sentence structure at a Grade 7 level.

The exercise pages are typical of reading workbooks and use various activities to test comprehension, build vocabulary and practise writing. A teacher's manual and answer key are available.

*The Spirit of Vocabulary (Canada)* is an attractively-presented vocabulary and reading book. Students liked the look of the book, the contemporary content, and the exercises. They found the material challenging as well as informative, educational, and stimulating. The use of repetition in the exercises increased student learning. Some students liked the pronunciations of highlighted words provided with each story. The most appealing feature for students was the Canadian content.

The reading skills required may limit the use in beginning literacy classes. The book could be used as an independent workbook, as an instructional tool on a one-to-one basis or as a class resource for readings and topical discussions.

# What you hear is what you get

**H**e has been called heavy-handed. He has been called a revolutionary. Newspapers have said his songs are anti-American. Bruce Cockburn himself describes his music as "rock with a conscience."

He believes that music is a means of bringing about social change. Songs about **topical** matters, Cockburn says, will **focus** attention where it needs to be focussed.

Is he heavy-handed? Certainly, the **lyrics** of his songs are not gentle, and he doesn't hide behind soft words and phrases. Just listen to "If a Tree Falls", a song about the **destruction** of the rainforest. Or hear "Radium Rain", which is all about **nuclear** accidents.

A very strong song is "Where The Death Squad Lives". It is a dark look at **violence** in Central America. Bruce Cockburn's videos can be even stronger. One shows South America caught in a meat grinder!

The singer himself is just as strong. He not only sings about **injustice**, Cockburn actually goes to countries in trouble to see for himself what is going on. Most of his songs are written after he sees first-hand what things are like.

Bruce Cockburn admits that his songs are very powerful. He also admits that they are written from a very personal **perspective**.

"I sing about what I see," he says. "And what I see upsets me. My songs are my way of trying to do something about it."

## Pronunciation

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revolutionary  
(rev-a-LOO-sh'n-air-ee)

lyrics  
(LEER-iks)

violence  
(VIE-a-l'ns)

conscience  
(KON-sh'ns)

destruction  
(di-STRUK-sh'n)

injustice  
(in-JUST-iss)

topical  
(TOP-i-k'l)

nuclear  
(NEW-klee-er)

perspective  
(per-SPEK-tiv)

focus  
(FOE-kus)

## APPLE CORE

~ Clarence Major

Up the road  
I saw black birds  
on the edge of a pine box.  
When I got there  
the birds flew a few feet away,  
to the other side.  
I looked down in the box.  
There were red apples,  
ripe, with stems still on them.  
A sign on the box said Take One.  
So I took one.  
My, it was heavy,  
and when I bit into it,  
you would not believe  
such sweetness. I walked on,  
eating it down to the core.  
When I finished, I threw the core  
out over a cornfield.  
A bird flew to catch it  
before it hit the ground,  
but it fell anyway.  
The bird followed.  
And I stood there,  
not seeing anything  
but the stalks moving  
in the morning wind.  
I waited, and the bird  
came up, carrying the core.  
He flew off across the field,  
carrying this thing,  
about twice the size  
of his own head.

## Not Only Me

**Author:** Paul Kropp

**Publisher:** Collier Macmillan Canada, 1987

**Available:** Maxwell MacMillan, 539 Collier MacMillan Drive,  
Cambridge, Ontario, N1R 5W9 Tel: 1-800-465-5273

**Price:** \$5.95

**Reviewed by:** Laurie Gould

**Level:** Functional

**ISBN** 02-953500-X

*Not Only Me* is a novel that deals with the difficult subject of child sexual abuse. It tells the story of Lynn, a young woman who has left home. Lynn's nine-year-old sister, Chrissie, keeps phoning and begging her to come back. Chrissie finally discloses what Lynn has at some level known all along—their step-father is a child abuser. Lynn must now acknowledge her own pain and help her family deal with this crisis.

Literacy instructors and students have shown a lot of interest in *Not Only Me*. One instructor commented, "I liked the lean and forceful writing, the way the author provided just enough detail to establish the characters and setting. This book is very clear in making its point that the cover-up of sexual abuse only serves to perpetuate the problem and damage the lives of more children."

Literacy students have been enthusiastic in their comments:

- "I have never read such an *intensifying* book. It's simple, straight forward, understandable. There's truth, reality...The book serves as a tool to break out of the pattern of 'secrets'."
- "It's very dramatic and the narrator keeps you curious to continue reading the story."

There have been few negative comments about *Not Only Me*. One student was concerned that some people might find the subject upsetting. An instructor made the point that "the ending seemed too easy." But even these two felt the book was valuable for opening discussion and shedding some light on a topic that has been taboo for so long. Instructors who choose to use this book with students might find some helpful suggestions for dealing with the difficult subject of child abuse in the resource book, *Let the Healing Begin*, which is also reviewed in this bulletin.

*Not Only Me* comes in a pocketbook format with an appropriate print size and plenty of white space. Illustrations are included every few pages.

## CHAPTER

# 7

It was way past dinner time when my mom and I left the hospital that night. We picked up Chrissie from Janie's house, then went to Wendy's for something to eat.

That gave the three of us time to talk. And we talked through everything. I guess I finally understood how awful all this was for her. Jack had been half of her life for the last seven years. He'd been a pretty good husband, a good father, at least outside the house. It wasn't easy for her to throw all that away.

But now she knew nothing else would work.

We figured that Jack would be out at a meeting by the time we got home. But we figured wrong. The light was on in the kitchen. We could see Jack inside even as we pulled into the driveway.

My mom looked scared, like she wasn't ready to face him yet.

"We'll be O.K.," I told her, squeezing her hand. "We're in this together now." I sounded a lot braver than I felt.

Mom just nodded.

The three of us walked into the house and hung up our coats. Jack was in the kitchen, washing some dishes. He looked at the three of us as we came in, and smiled. He smiled as if there was nothing wrong. But I could tell what the smile was covering up. Jack was scared.

"I wondered why you weren't here for supper," he said to my mom, as if we had just been out shopping, or gone to a movie.

"We've been to the hospital," my mother said.

"Somebody get hurt?" he asked, still smiling. I hated that smile.

"We've all been hurt, Jack," my mother told him. Her voice was shaking and she started to cry.

"By you," I threw in. I wanted to hit him. I wanted to hurt him, to get even for



## *Let the Healing Begin*

**Author:** Maureen McEvoy

**Publisher:** Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, 1990

**Available:** NVIT, Box 399, Merritt, B.C., V0K 2B0

**Tel:** (604) 378-2251 **Fax:** (604) 378-5898

**Price:** \$19.95

**Reviewed by:** Laurie Gould

**Level:** Functional/Independent

**ISBN** 1-55095-000-2

This valuable resource book was written by Maureen McEvoy who has been a counsellor and workshop leader in the area of child sexual abuse for many years. It introduces and explains the problem of child sexual abuse and shows how child abuse victims try to cope with their secret. It includes advice on how others can assist victims to disclose their painful secret and find help. It explains the process of reporting suspected abuse, and how the system in B.C. works. It suggests ways that individuals and groups can work together to deal with, and try to prevent sexual abuse. It is for any adult, teacher, student, parent, teenager, bandworker or community worker who wants to make a change.

*Let the Healing Begin* is written in simple, straightforward language and contains numerous illustrations and plenty of white space which help to make this book accessible to adult literacy students. The comprehensive appendix contains an annotated bibliography of books, abuse programs, films, and services as well as a glossary and a section on interviewing guidelines for workers to use with suspected abuse victims.

Although this book was designed for and draws upon the experience and ideas of native communities, it has a much wider audience and could be used in small groups, classroom, and workshops as well as for individual study. One instructor who trains family violence counsellors uses the book as assigned reading for the course. She feels that it does an especially good job of showing that child sexual abuse is a community problem and focuses on the need to change community values and structures. She also identified the section on picking a therapist as particularly worthwhile. One student in an adult learning centre said, "The information in the book would be helpful in breaking the cycle of incest and sexual abuse."

The one caution people used when recommending this book is that it does encourage and facilitate discussion, so anyone using this book should be prepared to deal with the emotions it may open up. Reading *Let the Healing Begin* will help you to prepare to deal with the subject of child sexual abuse with your students.

*Sexual abuse injures people in many ways, & the wounds take time to heal. Some leave scars; others may never heal at all. There are a lot of things adults can do to help victims recover from their wounds.*



*All the points in this section describe healing for adults, too. Adults have to work with the same hurts & feelings as children do.*

## Helping the Child who has been Sexually Abused

**H**ealing takes time. The child who has been sexually abused needs time to recover. Give the same reassurances to the child that were given at the time of disclosure. Parents and family should often say things like "It's not your fault," and "You were right to tell about the abuse." In fact, they should say it until they sound like a broken record.

Be aware that the child may still be afraid of the offender. The child may be expecting the offender to carry out the threats used during the abuse. The child may be afraid to go out into the community in case she or he runs into the offender. The child may also be afraid she or he will be removed from the home.

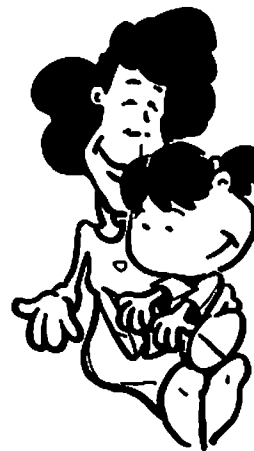
These fears block healing. It is important that adults help the child to name and talk about these fears. Encourage the child to ask for what will make her or him feel safe.

It helps if adults give the child a clear idea of what to expect on a daily basis. Consistent routines and predictability help calm the child's fears.

Once the child feels safe, a strange thing may happen. The child may seem to get worse. Like a cork popping from a bottle, all the feelings suppressed by the child during the abuse come tumbling out. Fear, confusion, guilt, shame, helplessness, and anger are some of the feelings the child may experience. This may be a very distressing time for adults, but the venting of feelings is an important healing step.

Some children will never recover the innocence of childhood. Adults can, however, help a child feel worthy of respect. Adults can teach children to value their bodies. Adults can also help increase a child's ability to trust others. Here are some of the areas where adults can help.

### Guilt



Children may feel guilty for many reasons: for being abused, for allowing it to happen, for enjoying it, for telling, for not telling sooner, for hurting family members, for disrupting the family, and for having mixed feelings towards the offender.

*The guest review for this issue is by Audrey Farnden, the Director of the Learning Disabilities Association of British Columbia, southern Vancouver Island chapter.*

## ***Literacy and Learning Disabilities: A Handbook for Literacy Workers***

**Author:** June W. Karassik

**Publisher:** Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, 1989

**Available:** LDAC, 323 Chapel Street, Suite 200,  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7Z2 Tel: (613) 238-5721 Fax: (613) 235-5391

**Price:** \$5.00

**ISBN** 0-919053-42-4

This handbook is written for literacy workers who are working with individual learners or small groups of learners and who are looking for ways to help those having particular difficulty in learning to read and write.

The book provides basic information on learning disabilities while stressing that each person is unique in the way in which he/she learns. It points out the puzzlement to both the learner and the teacher when the learner can speak well, but not read or write well or can read well but not write or spell. Another point it describes is the inconsistency that a person with a learning disability can display in both learning and remembering from day to day.

While giving some keys to a successful literacy program, this handbook also describes teaching and learning strategies that offer plenty of opportunity for creativity and flexibility. It offers concrete examples of ways to make this happen by providing a supportive, positive learning environment where new skills can be practised and learned.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada has also published a more extensive book on this topic called *Bringing Literacy Within Reach: Identifying and Teaching Adults With Learning Disabilities*, 1991, 150 pages, \$25.00.

literacy skills increase, the clients should be encouraged to reduce the use of compensation skills and to try their newly acquired skills.

Another equally important goal in literacy training is to teach the clients "how to learn" by giving them strategies to use in varied situations that they can apply once the formal lessons have ended.

## **Learning Strategies**

Research over the last decade has addressed some of the specific problem solving deficits that occur within the population of people with learning disabilities. Supportive learning strategies have been developed to target these deficit areas.

Students with learning disabilities have been described as "passive learners", not actively involved in the learning process (Torgeson, 1982). This passivity has been attributed to their inability to use appropriate task strategies (Alley and Deshler, 1979). For example, individuals with learning disabilities will usually not:

**Do a task analysis -**  
*What am I supposed to do?*  
*What are the steps?*  
*In what order should they be done?*

**Choose the most efficient way -**  
*How many ways are there to do this?*  
*Which is the best way?*

**Use inner language to guide their way through a task-**  
*O.K., now I've done that.*  
*Next, I do ...*

**Monitor -**  
*Ask themselves how they are doing in the*  
*midst of a task so that they can make corrections.*

**Change their approach to a task even when failure is obvious -**  
*They may not consider that there are alternatives.*



## *Canada Votes: How We Elect Our Government*

**Author:** Linda Granfield

**Publisher:** Kids Can Press, 1990

**Available:** Bookstores

**Price:** \$9.95

**Reviewed by:** Maureen Stephens

**Level:** Functional

**ISBN** 0-921103-88-3

*Canada Votes* focuses on the federal election process and how we elect our federal government. This topic is difficult to make readable and interesting to fundamental students, but *Canada Votes* is a reference book that makes learning about federal politics fun.

The book is divided into nineteen sections. These sections deal with such topics as Who Can Vote?, Getting on a Voters' List, How Do I Look? (politicians and their image), etc. The topics do not follow any particular sequence. An informative glossary and index are at the back of the book.

The layout of the book is very appealing to the adult reader. Comical cartoon illustrations appear on each page and break up the print.

This book was used extensively by an English 60 class and their comments reflect its true value

- "Now that I have been introduced to how election and Canadian politics operate, I look at politics more positively."
- "It is about time there was a book like this for people who are not strong readers, but who want to know more about government."
- "I feel that it got my interest up in wanting to learn more about today's politics."
- "I never cared for voting or government before. I wouldn't of even voted but I voted (B.C. election Oct. '91). I found it very interesting to see how the different parties started."

## Scrutinizing the Situation

When you enter the polling station, you may see some people sitting near the DRO and the poll clerk. These are the *scrutineers*. They observe carefully, or "scrutinize," the voting proceedings to make sure everything is following the law.

Scrutineers are appointed by the candidates to work at the station on their behalf. They may examine the poll book as election day progresses to see who has voted. If John Green, one of

the candidate's strongest supporters, hasn't voted yet, the scrutineer may relay information to the campaign office. People there can call Mr. Green and see if he needs a ride to the polls, a babysitter, whatever. They need his vote. A scrutineer can leave and re-enter the station as he pleases and can challenge a voter's right to vote. But he cannot question any voter or influence a voter's decision.



# *Forms in Your Life* *A Student Workbook and Guide to Everyday Forms* (Third Edition)

**Author:** Thomas F. Elrick

**Publisher:** Globe/Modern Curriculum Press, 1991

**Available:** Globe/Modern, 3771 Victoria Park Ave.,  
Scarborough, Ontario, M1W 2P9 Tel.: 1-800-263-4005

**Price:** \$10.85

**Reviewed by:** Basha Rahn

**Level:** Independent

**ISBN** 0-88996-244-8

*Forms in Your Life*, intended as a practice book, contains 26 actually reproduced forms that people use in everyday life. Before each form there is a list of words and phrases which appear in the form. In an appendix at the back of the book there is a list of abbreviations and short forms of words useful for many business needs. The book has large easy-to-read print and spacing around the text and forms.

The contents include forms for school and employment, for banking, for consumer needs, for housing and for provincial and federal applications. There is a personal fact sheet at the front of the book for students to keep as an information source for forms. This revised edition, published in 1991, has up-to-date forms and a more adult approach towards readers.

Because forms are essential for everyone, being able to work through the forms in a group or with a tutor makes *Forms In Your Life* a worthwhile resource. Students who have never before done their own banking have found this kind of practice a useful activity.

Some concerns should be mentioned. Students and teachers have found the vocabulary complicated. In the suggested words and phrases preceding each form, a student needs to find the meaning of those words or work with others to understand the phrases necessary to fill out the forms. A further weakness is the reduced size of the forms which makes some of them difficult to read and fill in. These may need to be enlarged on a photocopier before you can use them.

Despite these objections, *Forms In Your Life* can be recommended for its advantages in a class or tutoring situation.

## Part Time Job Application



A part time job can be very rewarding. Part time jobs mean meeting new people, earning extra money, and of course learning new skills. You can work during the day, in the evening, on weekends, or on summer holidays. To apply for a part time job you will usually have to fill out a company application form, similar to the one shown here.

Part time jobs can be found in many different places, for example, in fast food restaurants, offices or stores. You can choose some local businesses to apply to, or you can follow up the advertised job openings in the paper or at your local Canada Employment Centre. Usually you can take the application form home to fill it out.

## Words and Phrases

The following words appear on Form 3. Do you know what they mean? Look up any word that you don't know. Write a short definition for each word or phrase. If you prefer you may use the word or phrase in a sentence. The first one has been done for you.

criminal offense An act that breaks the law.

proof of age \_\_\_\_\_

availability \_\_\_\_\_



## *The Childbearing Year*

**Author:** Barbara B. Holstein

**Publisher:** New Readers Press, 1990

**Available:** Artel Educational Resources, 5528 Kingsway,  
Burnaby, B.C., V5Z 2G2 Tel: (603) 435-4949 Fax: (603) 435-1955

**Price:** \$12.95

**Reviewed by:** Lorraine Fox

**Level:** Functional/Independent

**ISBN** 0-88336-567-7

This book is designed to help mothers-to-be learn about keeping themselves and their babies healthy during pregnancy. It is divided into three sections: Pregnancy, Birth, and You and Your Baby. There is a complete glossary of words used in each chapter at the back of the book. Black and white line drawings, photos, and bold headings break up the text throughout the book.

*The Childbearing Year* could be used as a guide for an entire pregnancy and birth and would be a useful component in a health or lifestyles class. The language is concise and is at a level that can be used by students of various reading capabilities.

A public health nurse who field tested the book said certain techniques illustrated do not represent current hospital procedures. For example, she noted that most deliveries occur in a semi-reclining position rather than with the stirrups pictured in one of the diagrams.

Overall, I feel this book would be useful in explaining the wonders of birth to new mothers. One of my students who is post-natal enjoyed reading and discussing the material. Another student in Victoria said, "It gives a good basic coverage of what to expect, but for myself it didn't seem to have enough detail."

### Your feelings

By the middle of pregnancy, you can feel the baby move inside you. The baby is "real" in a new way. Feeling the baby move makes some women dream about babies. Some dreams are funny. Some are scary. It is normal to have dreams about babies. Use this space to write down your dreams. If you don't remember a dream, write down your feelings about having a baby.

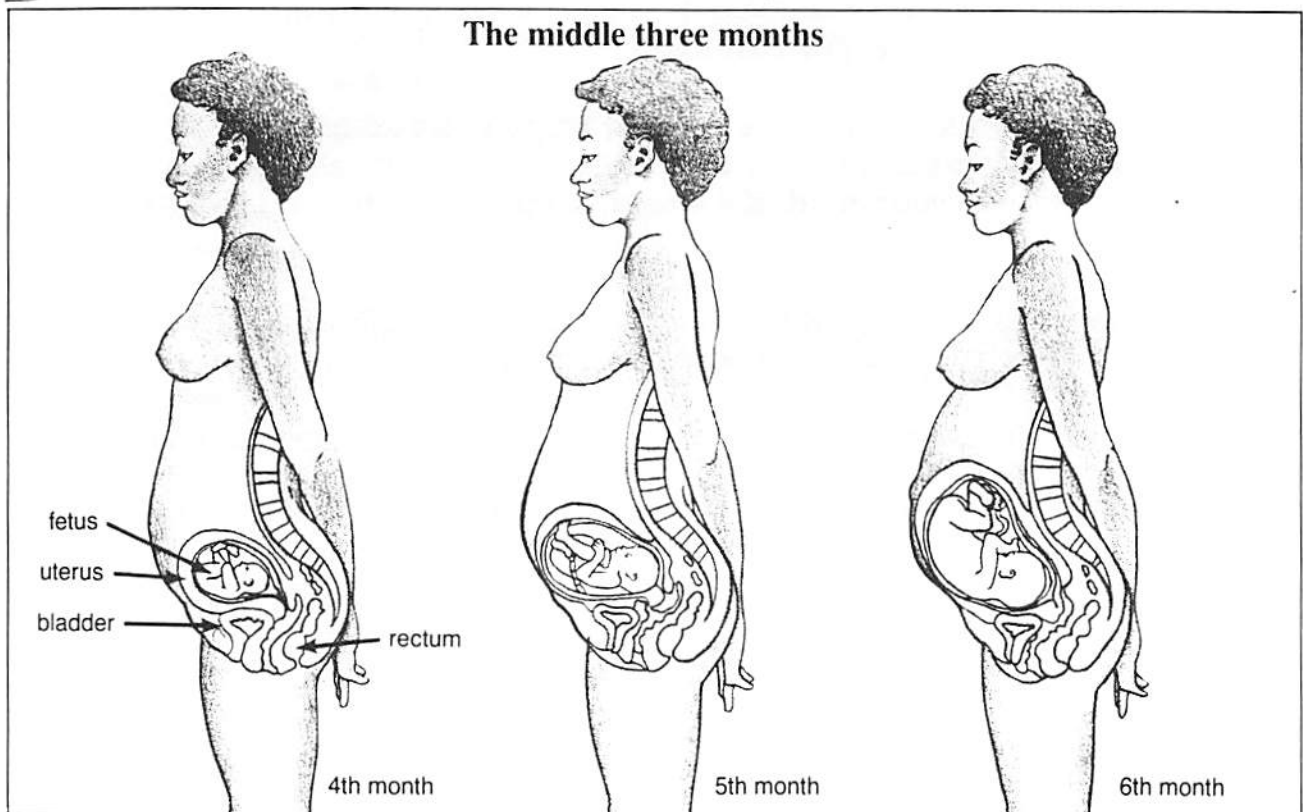
### What is happening to my baby?

From now until your baby is born, it is called a fetus. *Fetus* means "unborn." The fetus grows very fast. In the fourth month, it is six inches long. By the sixth month, it is 12 inches long! Soon it will weigh one pound.

By now your baby has tiny bones. It can open its eyes and hear the sound of your voice. All of the baby's parts are there.

The fetus moves a lot. Soon you will feel it. It will flutter. It will tickle. Sometimes it feels like butterflies in your tummy.

### The middle three months



## ***A Good Beginning: Enjoying Your Baby's First Year***

**Author:** Barbara Lewis

**Publisher:** New Readers Press, 1990

**Available:** Artel Educational Resources, 5528 Kingsway, Burnaby,  
B.C., V5H 2G2 Tel: (604) 435-4949 Fax: (604) 435-1955

**Price:** \$11.95

**Reviewed by:** Joan Acosta

**Level:** Basic

**ISBN** 0-883336-570-7

*A Good Beginning: Enjoying Your Baby's First Year* is a month-by-month guide to the first year of a baby's life. It is a combination of text which could be used in a classroom setting and a wall calendar for home use.

The pages have an open format with lots of white space and illustrations. The text itself is easy to read and avoids being preachy. There is information about child development as well as simple ideas to encourage creative play and communication between baby and parent. Traditional nursery rhymes are included as well as directions for easy-to-make, low-cost toys.

The author encourages experimentation and emphasizes adapting to the likes and dislikes of the child, rather than offering a restrictive list of do's and don'ts. Lewis says, "Fit each idea to your child. If it works, keeps it. If it doesn't, try later or forget about it."

Two young mothers who used *A Good Beginning* had the following comments:

- "I wish I'd got it when Shane was born, instead of at six months. It has lots of good ideas."
- "I hung it near the change table and read it while I was changing my baby's diapers."

## 5 - 6 months

### **Baby wants to learn about the world around her.**

Name the objects she sees: "See the lamp." Name household objects (pictures, furniture, lights, stove, etc.).

Whatever you give to baby, name it (food, toys, clothes, etc.).

When you're outdoors, name the trees, flowers, animals, etc.

### **Baby is growing socially.**

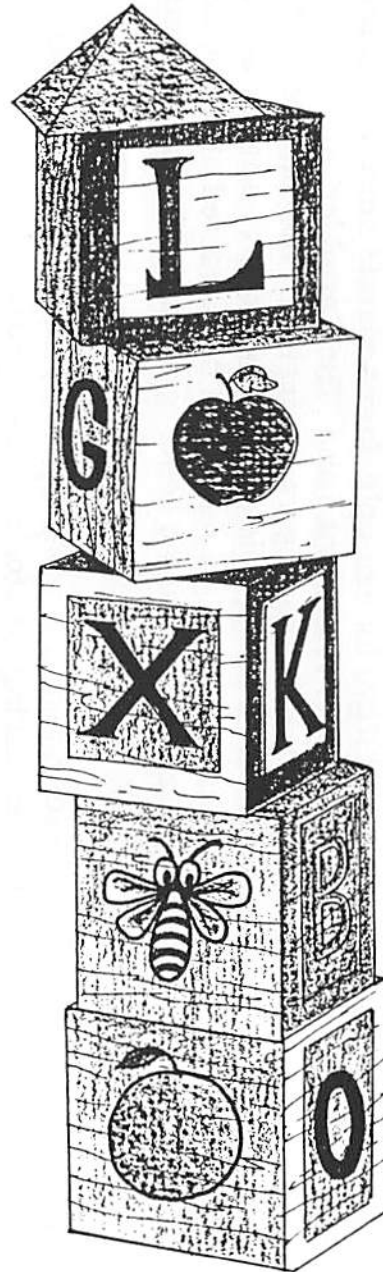
Play games with her.

Have family members play games with her.

Let her watch other children play.

Play "Peek-a-Boo." Put your hands over your eyes first, then put baby's hands over her eyes.

Play "This Little Piggy" with baby's toes.



### **Baby likes success.**

She learns to try.

Let her know when she's done a good job. Reward her with a smile or a hug, or say "good."

### **She likes toys that make noise.**

Give her toys that bang and shake.

Simple toys can be found around the house. Here is one idea.

- Put one or two blocks in an oatmeal box. Be sure to seal the top.



## Stories for Parents

**Author:** Clairece Feagin and Michelle Feagin

**Publisher:** Contemporary Books, 1990

**Available:** Fitzhenry Whiteside, 91 Granton Richmond Hill,  
Ontario, L4B 2N5 Tel: (416) 764-0030 Fax: (416) 764-7156

**Price:** \$4.95 each

**Reviewed by:** Paula Davies

**Level:** Basic

This new series, by Contemporary Books, contains six small booklets all dealing with topics of concern to parents. Issues such as building children's self esteem, coping with stress and anger, and safety in the home are explored.

Each small book is broken into several short vignettes all relating to the general theme of the book. In *Making It Right* for example, four separate stories, "Tommy and the T.V.," "The Snowball," "Lori's Accident," and "The Sprinkler" all show children getting into mishaps and how their parents deal with the situations. At the end of each vignette there are several multiple choice questions to answer as well as several more general questions relating to parenting to be pondered and discussed. A boxed summation of the parenting principle being approached in each vignette is also provided.

During field testing, students responded positively to these books. In one class, learners had specifically been asking for stories dealing with parenting. This set was subsequently ordered and has been well used. These students particularly liked the suggestions offered in the boxed summations.

A weakness raised by several of the instructors who used the books is the rather stilted, unnatural, Dick and Jane quality of the text. Complicated parenting problems are presented in very simplistic terms, which at times borders on paternalistic.

However, the low reading level coupled with the high interest level of these books, makes them accessible to individual students and valuable as a stimulation for group discussions on parenting.

## *The Gift of Literacy: Books to Share with Children Bibliography*

**Author:** Terry Clark

**Available:** Vancouver Public Library, 750 Burrard Street,  
Vancouver, B.C., V6K 1C5

**Reviewed by:** Thomas Quigley

Terry Clark, head of the library's Youth Division, created this bibliography as a book selection tool for Invergarry Learning Centre, and the Centre has graciously agreed to share it with any other groups or individuals who might find it useful. It lists quality children's literature that adult learners might want to share with their children. Books were chosen on the basis of their appeal to adults, not kids. The 246 titles are presented in one sequence in alphabetical order by author. There are no annotations. Canadian titles are included, and are indicated in the list. All books were in print at the time the list was created; ordering information is included, with an emphasis on paperback editions.

The titles portray a wide variety of cultures and a broad range of lifestyles. While most are picture books at the Basic level, there are some controlled vocabulary readers and short children's novels at the Functional level.

You are welcome to come to the Vancouver Public Library and photocopy the list at your own cost. If that isn't possible, go to your local library and request this bibliography through inter-library loan.

## Our Words

**Authors:** Project Literacy Kelowna Learners

**Available:** Maxine Veach, Project Literacy Kelowna, #14-1304  
Ellis Street, Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 1Z8 Tel: (603) 762-2163

**Price:** \$5.00

**Reviewed by:** Barbara Bate

**Level:** Basic

*Our Words* is an anthology of short stories written by Project Literacy Kelowna learners. The book is appropriately dedicated to the tutors and learners of this literacy group.

The stories in *Our Words* reflect the life experiences of the writers. The authors are real people talking about real issues—education, jobs, relationships. Such titles as "My Life in Carnival," "My Second Job," and "Freedom to Grow" are inviting to new readers who feel comfortable with the subject matter.

In addition, the stories inspire new writers who benefit from the experience of others. One student who reviewed the book said, "Sometimes you don't know about other people's lives and you read this and you see that what happened to you, happened to someone else."

*Our Words* is free of bias, appropriate for beginning readers and writers, and will remain current. It is a friendly little book, attractively laid out with interesting illustrations.

### Rodeo Rider

by The Cowboy

I was in the Rodeo for fifteen years. I started at age sixteen and quit at thirty-three. In most of the rodeos I competed in, I rode bareback and saddle broncs and also bulls. Even though I have won lots of money, it isn't all fun and games because I have so many broken bones. When I was not rodeoing I drove an eighteen wheeler and my C.B. handle was Cowboy.



## Out and About

The Literacy Advisory Committee of the Greater Vancouver Library Federation recently sponsored a workshop called "Literacy Materials: Why, Where and How." It was attended by 65 members of the literacy, library, and publishing communities. Three members of our committee participated and a collection of the materials reviewed to date in the Bulletin were available for examination in a display set up by the Adult Literacy Contact Centre.

**Laurie Gould** started off the day-long activities with a talk about the criteria for selecting good literacy materials. She explained in detail the criteria used by the Literacy Materials Committee and suggested ways to find the best literacy materials available.

**Joan Acosta** gave a workshop on Plain Language which provided participants with general guidelines for making materials clear and easy to read. She discussed and gave examples of some of the factors which affect readability such as language, organization, and layout and design.

**Thomas Quigley**, in addition to playing a primary part in the planning and organization of the conference, moderated a lively roundtable discussion on the problems and concerns of literacy book publishers and consumers. As well, Thomas, in his role of librarian, described ways of processing literacy materials in libraries.

## Bookmark Posters

In the spring of '91, a Victoria graphic arts class completed a project — three posters on the topic of Communication and Literacy— which has achieved international recognition.

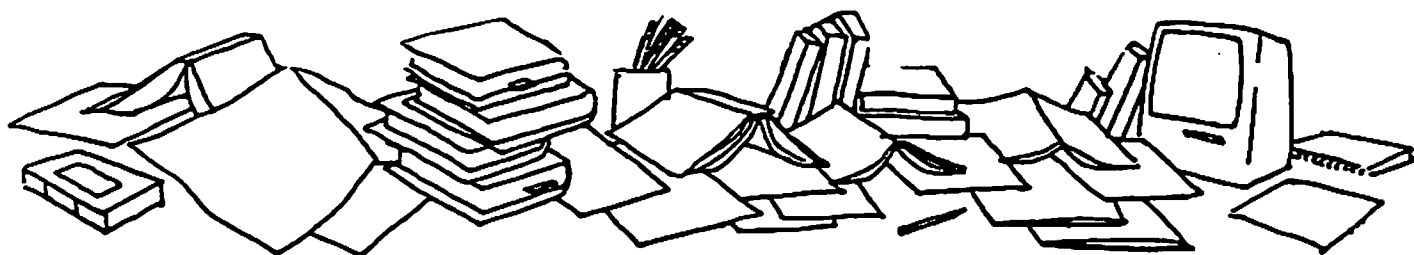
Each student designed a bookmark based on one letter of the alphabet, and the 26 designs were combined into the three posters.

Each set of full-colour posters includes a set of 28 individual bookmarks. The images and words touch on literacy and Braille, the environment and music, the pain of the non-reader and the joy of the newly-literate.

If you are interested in acquiring a set of posters and bookmarks, please contact Project Literacy Victoria at 381-3755. The \$15.00 per set charge includes shipping, and assists the Victoria organization in funding its Volunteer Tutor Training Programme.







## **Information about *The Literacy Materials Bulletin***

### **Selecting materials**

In 1990, the committee established a number of criteria for use in selecting materials.

We are looking for material which is:

- ☒ currently in print.
- ☒ adult-oriented and interesting to learners.
- ☒ free of bias from age, sex, and race.
- ☒ appropriate to the reading level of learners.
- ☒ designed to encourage meaningful discussion and critical thinking.
- ☒ up-to-date and easy to use.
- ☒ successful with learners.

Wherever possible, we try to select and field test material with Canadian content.

### **Circulating materials**

The materials reviewed in this bulletin are available on a loan basis for a period of a month. If you wish to borrow any of them, please contact:

**Literacy B.C.**  
**Suite 1128, 510 West Hastings Street**  
**Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8**  
**Tel/Fax: 687-5077**

### **Permanent collection**

A complete and permanent set of the materials from all five bulletins is available at:

**Adult Literacy Contact Centre**  
**Suite 622, 510 West Hastings Street**  
**Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1L8**  
**Tel: 684-0624 (Lower Mainland) 1-800-663-1293 (toll free)**

## RECOMMENDED LITERACY MATERIALS REVIEW FORM

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Author \_\_\_\_\_

Publisher \_\_\_\_\_ Copyright Date \_\_\_\_\_

Level (please circle)

\*Basic (0-3)

\*\*Functional (4-6)

\*\*\*Independent (7-9)

*Please comment briefly on each of these. Feel free to include more information on an additional sheet.*

1. Adult oriented? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Interesting to learners? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Appropriate to the reading level of learners? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Successful with learners? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Encourages meaningful discussion and critical thinking? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Easy to use? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Free of bias for age, sex, and race? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Up-to-date? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Canadian content? \_\_\_\_\_

*Send the completed form to:*

**Laurie Gould  
Basic Education Department  
Vancouver Community College (KEC)  
1155 East Broadway  
Vancouver, B.C.  
V5T 4N3**

Recommended by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(institution)